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**Testimony of Betsy Mahoney, Esq., in Favor of LD 1637, An Act To Prevent Medicaid Payment from a Savings Account Established under the Federal ABL Act of 2014**

Senator Gratwick, Representative Hymanson, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Betsy Mahoney and I am the community outreach liaison for the Autism Society of Maine.

ASM was involved in the effort to pass the 2016 ABL legislation in Maine, and we are pleased to endorse this bill, which will allow Maine residents to maximize financial advantage in opening tax-advantaged savings accounts for persons with disabilities.

We encourage the Legislature to pass the bill to give certainty to Maine ABL account holders and encourage savings. An ABL account will make a difference for my family and me.

I have a 28-year-old son with autism and intellectual disabilities who is a member of MaineCare. My husband and I would like to be able to put aside money for him without worrying about the State of Maine coming in to take that money for MaineCare benefits. This bill would allow us to do this through an ABL account.

We are also relieved that the bill provides that funds held in an ABL account cannot be counted when the government is determining the designated beneficiary's eligibility for any means-tested public assistance program.

Finally, we are in support of the provision that earnings on funds in an ABL account are tax-exempt as far as the State is concerned.

The Autism Society of Maine urges the committee to pass this bill.

Betsy Mahoney, Esq.  
Autism Society of Maine

Testimony of Betsy Mahoney, Esq., in Favor of LD 1637, An Act To Prevent Medicaid Payment from a Savings Account Established under the Federal ABLE Act of 2014

Senator Gratwick, Representative Hymanson, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Betsy Mahoney and I am the community outreach liaison for the Autism Society of Maine.

ASM was involved in the effort to pass the 2016 ABLE legislation in Maine, and we are pleased to endorse this bill, which will allow Maine residents to maximize financial advantage in opening tax-advantaged savings accounts for persons with disabilities.

We encourage the Legislature to pass the bill to give certainty to Maine ABLE account holders and encourage savings. An ABLE account will make a difference for my family and me.

I have a 28-year-old son with autism and intellectual disabilities who is a member of MaineCare. My husband and I would like to be able to put aside money for him without worrying about the State of Maine coming in to take that money for MaineCare benefits. This bill would allow us to do this through an ABLE account.

We are also relieved that the bill provides that funds held in an ABLE account cannot be counted when the government is determining the designated beneficiary's eligibility for any means-tested public assistance program.

Finally, we are in support of the provision that earnings on funds in an ABLE account are tax-exempt as far as the State is concerned.

The Autism Society of Maine urges the committee to pass this bill.